Times-Virginian

Church News

Cornelius

Eager follower

By William L. Trimyer
Cornelius: An Eager Follower
Lesson for July 18, 1982
Bible Study Passages: Acts 10:1-2, 30-35, 44-48
INTRODUCTION

The amount of space given by Luke to tell about Cornelius is by design and not accidental. One may ask why Luke made such a mountain out of a molehill character like Cornelius.

One of the things Jesus tried to impress upon his disciples and followers was that the Gospel was intended for all people and nations. Such an insight was a long time coming for some disciples and churches.

The straight-line theology of the early church saw no room for a grace that reached beyond the Judeo-Israelite tradition. The ministry and teachings of Jesus shattered the narrow thinking of his day. Christ demonstrated at every turn that he was a Savior to "all who believe."

Cornelius is a striking example of how the Gospel of grace went beyond the traditional boundary lines to include Gentiles. Perhaps we'll learn from our investigation of Cornelius how our narrow views may at times exclude others because they happen to be different and not of the same mold from which we come.

A Devout God-Fearer [Acts 10:1-2]

Cornelius was not just another face off the street. He held a prominent position as a commander of one hundred men. Cornelius possessed extreme devotion to his faith and religious practices. His devotion lead him to share his faith with his family and friends, and Cornelius was very careful to donate his alms and pray daily to God.

Such devotion should not be overlooked or rebuked. Cornelius' commitment to his faith ran deep. No doubt he made a fine military leader with such a compassionate heart.

A Special Message Delivered [Acts 10:30-33]

One of the striking characteristics about Cornelius is his searching nature. He was constantly on the search for new meaning and experience. It was during one of his ritual fasts that God spoke to Cornelius through an angle who praised this Roman centurion for his prayers and generosity.

Here was a man who balanced his piety with his social concern. His devotion to God only heightened his awareness of the poverty and suffering around him. We may learn a good lesson from Cornelius, namely, that piety should never blind us to the needs of others.

There are churches which major on the minors, that is, they devote enormous energies to self and neglect the suffering and social problems at their doorstep. The church can never forget that social problems have spiritual implications, because social problems are people in need.

A Lesson For Peter [Acts 10:34-48]

Cornelius left his mark in such a way that Peter was able to say, "I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." God moved in such a way that Peter's straight-lined theology became a theology of grace for all who believe.

In a vision Peter learned that he, like God, must be open to the presence of the Gentile world. No longer could he overlook his own prejudices and deny the existence of the Gentile world.

It is a new day whenever we can overlook our prejudices and accept another person simply because they are creations of God. God is no respecter of faces, regardless of their color or station in life. God's kingdom houses people from all walks of life. There is no segregation in the kingdom of God.

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Dr. Trimyer is Chaplain at Burnham Hospital in Champaign, Illinois (WL-YP)

Film set at New Hope

"God's Prison Gang," a newly released film featuring Al Capone's getaway driver, the last member of Bonnie and Clyde's gang and two other notorious criminals who have become Christians will be shown at New Hope Baptist Church, Highway 24 East, on Sunday evening, July 18. The showing is scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m. This film is being sponsored by the youth of New Hope, as lead by Calvin Smith.

The film, shot behind the walls of New York's Attica prison, is hosted by Art Linkletter. It tells the story of how the work of International Prison Ministry is accomplishing what more guards, higher prison walls and greater financial expenditures have failed to do-keep released inmates from returning to lives of crime.

Telling their stories in the 44-minute film are George Meyer, Al Capone's favorite driver; Floyd Hamilton, (Public Enemy No. 1) the last of the Bonnie and Clyde Gang; Jerry Graham, the "robber king" of California; and Ted Jefferson, convicted of crimes from drugs and robbery to murder.

Also featured is "Chaplain Ray," whose Dallas-based International Prison Ministry has changed the lives of thousands of inmates over the past 18 years.

The Reverend Bob Williams, pastor of New Hope Baptist church, said he hopes all citizens concerned about the problem of rising crime will attend the screening of the film.

Free-will donations will be accepted to offset the expense of the film.

Film slated

There will be a free public showing of the Billy Graham film "His Land" at Yellow Branch Baptist Church this Sunday, July 18, at 7:30 p.m.

The public is invited to attend.

Concert planned

On July 18, at 7:30 the Pathlighters of College Hill Baptist Church in Lynchburg will appear in concert at the Red Oak Baptist Church, the Reverend Jim Vaught, pastor. Following the concert there will be an old fashioned ice cream eat.

The public is cordially invited to attend.

Oakville news

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Martin, Laura Lee, Mr. and Mrs. O. W. Martin Jr. have returned home from a week's vacation at Ocean Isle Beach where they were joined by their other son, Mr. Jimmy Martin and his wife, Mickie, and Wes and Matt of Memphis, Tenn. The grandsons, Wes and Matt remained here with the grandparents for several weeks.

The weekend of June 26-27, Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Marshall were guest in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Newcomb of Poquoson, Va. On Sunday, June 27 they attended the wedding and reception of Miss Kelly Ann Harsh and Mr. Rickegesire Pritchett at Hampton Baptist Church in Hampton, Va. The reception was held at the pool garden of the Chamberlain Hotel in Hampton, Va. Miss Kathy Marshall, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Marshall, served as one of the bridesmaids in the Harsh-Pritchett wedding.

Our hearts are saddened by the death of Mrs. Rachel Moore. Sympathy is extended to family, friends.

Mrs. Graydon Martin, Mrs. Hubbard Moore, Mrs. A. M. Johnston (Sue), Mrs. Wm. Hickman, Mr. and Mrs. Mason Bantam were dinner guests of Mr. Warren Moore, and Mr. Neill Cliff of Wintergreen, Va., Sunday. Mr. and Mrs. William Brown of Ohio and daughter, Marbi were guests in the home of Mrs. A. M. Johnson last week. Mrs. William Huchins was also a guest in this home. She returned to Decatur, Illinois Tuesday.

Mt. Airy news

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most high. "Psalms 92:1

The Senior Choir will be singing at the Morning Star Baptist Church in Appomattox on Friday night. The bus will leave Mt. Airy at 7:15 p.m.

The Senior Choir, along with the Junior Choir will be singing for the afternoon service at the Union Hill Baptist Church in Buckingham on Sunday. The bus will leave Mt. Airy at 1:30.

On Sunday night, July 18, our pastor, the Rev. H. W. Pryor, along with the Senior and Junior Choirs will be at the Canaan Baptist Church at 7 p.m.

Thought: Let us take life just one day at a time. Tomorrow will stand of itself.

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Program set at Bethel Bible

An exciting program has been prepared at Bethel Bible Church for V.B.S. to be held July 19-24.

V.B.S. will run from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. each day.

Classes will be offered for every age group.

Students ... engaged and involved through such activities as song time, Bible study, rap sessions, craft making, and game time.

For additional information, call Mrs. David Grove at 352-8345.

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